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## THE BACK STREET.

The back street is necessarily a poor street, but it has a special character as a poor street. As one who forms part of a great society of uniformly poor people in a secluded rural district, is a different sort of person altogether from a member of a depressed class living in the immediate vicinity of rich people, so is a common poor street different from a poor street which is a back one. The latter is additionally poor by contrast, and by its containing things and persons which suggest affluence without partaking of it. The back street suffers by an unfortunate but unavoidable comparison. We turn the corner from a godly well-to-do-street, and feel ourselves all at once plunged into one full of fifteenth-rate houses and shops. This is a trial which no mortal street can stand. We walk with an easy mind through a regular district of the humblest class; but we *pity* a back street. The worst peculiarity of back streets is their fallen-off broken-down appearance. Somehow they are always built at first on a supposition that they are to be nice genteel streets, fit for very tolerable sort of people; but they never keep up the character for more than three or four years, and regularly decline into something superlatively shabby. Not that back streets have not their struggles. They do their very best, I thoroughly believe, to resist the downward tendency of circumstances. Often we see a bit at the end, on one side, keeping up a neat appearance—painting the doors green once a-year with a desperate earnestness—and making great efforts to suppress a small broker who exhibits old candlesticks and stools out-of-doors at the corner; but it is sure to be in vain. One heroic Leonidas of a proprietor will linger with a powerful apparition of white gauze blinds after all his own sort of people have vanished; but even he has at length to go, for the sake of a better neighbourhood for his children; and then the case is settled. Our unfortunate back street never again holds up its head. It breaks all out in an inflammation of little shops, loose heart about its window-panes, and begins to have far too many children. The very scavenger disrespects it, and only gives it a cleaning when he likes. In short, it becomes an out-and-out back street.

It is wonderful, all things considered, how a back street lives. The inhabitants all appear extremely poor. Yet it generally contrives to have a small shop for the materials of jollity every alternate door, with rarely less than one good baker's and a tolerable butcher's shop, besides an infinity of places with three penny loaves, two cabbages, and a stick of pipeclay in the window. One wonders whence all the custom comes for these shops, for it is evident the fine streets do nothing for their poor neighbour, and there is no thoroughfare. There is even a grocer, who puts a sugar

barrel out in front of his door every morning, as if he was always just done with disburdening it of its contents: the boys have of course discovered the trick ages ago, and know there is not a particle of the sweet merchandise to be had in the inside for love or money; but still it seems to betoken a rather lively business. There is a smaller grocery concern, with two placards in the window, expressing 'Agent for Grey's Polishing Fluid,' and 'Fresh butter from the country every Thursday.' How do they all get business? Has the back street a self-supporting mutually-devouring character, or how is it? There are also two mangles, one old and well-established, the other a bustling noisy rival, eager for a share of trade. You hear the rumble of the machinery, mingled with a conflict of women's tongues, as you pass along. A chimney-sweep, with strong pretensions as to the putting-up of cans, has been established for years in one of the murky entries. He is an old man as black as Erebus all the week, but washes out gray and respectable on the Sundays. One of the most original sort of people about the street is a man who deals in asses' milk—recommended by the Faculty. He has a den in a back court for himself and cattle, the braying of which has often attracted the hostile attention of the police; but he always battles them off. There is also a small millinery shop, with a female name over the door, and a modest insinuation of neatly-ribboned gauze caps in the window. Look in beyond the inner screen, and you catch a glimpse of two poor women, of the age of possible mother and daughter, sewing away as for dear life. The back street has a kind feeling towards these two poor women, for they are unusually industrious and inoffensive beings—tried, moreover, with a sore oppression besides poverty, in the form of an unhappy husband and father, who has been corrupted out of all good feeling, and torments them for the means of supplying his base indulgences. Yet they struggle on, and add to the wonder already excited by the back street in general, as to its powers of self-support. It would almost appear as if there were still some people fed by the ravens.

Amongst the denizens of the back street is a retailer of flour, bran, potatoes, and other articles of rural produce, of which samples are duly presented in the window. But it is a shop of evidently scanty business, and has got quite dusty for want of encouragement. Step in for a biscuit, and you are served by a blooming rustic-looking maiden, whose manner strongly betrays how little she is used to such a kind of life. An old enfeebled man sits sunning himself in a wooden arm-chair within the window, lulled by the hummy buzzzy sound of the flies within the bespotted panes, and with an out-dated newspaper of mouldering appearance spread upon his knees. It is irresistible to make a remark about the fine weather to the venerable patriarch, and he heartily

assents, but intimates how much the crops need rain. There is a memory of the Lammermuirs or Teviotdale in his very voice and the fading red of his cheek. But never more will the lark bid him a blithe good-morrow, never more will he delight to view the sheep and kye thrive bonnie O, on Whitaed lees or the Fairy knowe. He is a broken farmer, obliged at the end of a long hard-working life to seek shelter for his gray hairs in a back street in the city with his wife and two daughters, one of whom was the dispenser of the biscuit. A wreck of household furniture was nearly all that was left to the old goodman when he forsook his farm; but some neighbours, pitying his state, gave him credit for a very small stock of articles wherewith to set up a shop; and behold him settled here, accordingly, to pine amidst the confinement and nastiness of a town over the recollection of better days. To turn such a man to the occupation of a shopkeeper, is like setting an honest shepherd's dog to play tricks. The concern does not, never can succeed. Meanwhile one of the daughters has gone to be a superior sort of servant. The other must remain to take charge of her infirm parents, and attend to business. What a cheerless life for beings lately so happily situated! At first the old man was able to walk almost every day to the outkirkts of the town, there to catch a glimpse of the country; but now he hardly can move to the end of the street. He feels that he has had his last sight of the face of nature, that the green leaves and fresh blade must for the future be but ideas of the mind, till the eye that closes in death's sleep shall awake to see, and know all. One only joy ever visits the home of the poor victual-dealer. It is when an old country neighbour stumbles in upon them—no matter what sort of person he be, so he only comes from near Whitside. The cold sorrow-subdued voice of the family then bursts up in a volcano of energy and gleesome excitement. Loud hearty salutations and inquiries break the forenoon stillness, and the visitor is almost dragged into the room behind the shop, and forced into a chair. There, with his delighted friends around him, he will discourse for a quarter of an hour about their old neighbours, and all the concerns of the country-side they once called theirs; while the best in the house is paraded, and everything but thrust down his throat. If anybody comes into the shop at that moment, Helen serves with a frightful impatience, and hurries back to devour up all that falls from the visitor's tongue, as if it were so precious, that to lose one word of it were a hardship. At length, at the top-flood of a conversation that might be heard as far as a hackney chal, the visitor rises to depart—to their infinite consternation, for they had reckoned him as their own for half a day at least—but country people always are in such a hurry when in town—and this consternation ascends in a perfect coronach or whoop of anguish, as if they felt themselves the wofuldest people in the world, and never thought to have been treated in such a manner by an old friend. Amidst the clamour Rusticus breaks off, but not without the most solemn promise to come again and see them next time he visits the town. He goes, and down again sinks the voice of the family to the low tenor to which sorrow has tuned it.

The back street is remarkable for the perpetual mutations of its inhabitants. It has one or two families of four years' standing, who look upon themselves as quite an aristocracy among the rest, one being a pawnbroker, and the other the keeper of a thriving tavern which gives no credit. But the bulk of the people are of a year's continuance at most, or perhaps scarcely so much. The fact is, the back street is only a pis alley, a harbour of refuge for persons quite at a loss where to go to. Men-servants discharged for marrying, go franticly and set up a shop in the back street. Youths interrupted by poverty in the midst of their studies for professions, plunge headlong into the back street, in the mad hope of living there by keeping a school—forgetting that wherever there are most children, there is always the less inclination for a paid

education. Tradesmen who have failed in considerable streets, faintly think to get along under a jury mast in a small shop in the back street. Shops wake, therefore, into new life every few months, and almost immediately die again and make no sign, like babes which give up their breath before they have well drawn it. Presently come the bill-stickers, like so many Robin Redbreasts, and cover them all over with leaves. Long does the landlord wait for a new tenant; insanely but vainly does he denounce the bill-stickers; paste keeps the ascendant maugre all his efforts. At length the premises all at once some fine morning break out into a dashing eating-house, with a round of beef in the window, supported by a plate of sausages on the one side and a dish of mince collops on the other, looking all as if mankind could not fail to pour in as they went by to enjoy so many good things. Alas! 'I've paced much this weary mortal round,' and after a month, it is not half done. The shop for some time can't believe that it is not to be patronised, and goes on looking as bright and hopeful as ever; but it wont do. Mankind either have ceased to eat, or they know not where eating is best; and so, after a desperate struggle of a quarter, the shop resigns itself once more to the bill-stickers, who, like trusty undertakers, right soon come to swathe the corpse. One half of the shops thus fall asleep and wake again twice a-year at an average. In short, everything is in a state of tentation in the back street. It is a place of forlorn hopes and hopeless expedients. All that is unfortunate everywhere else, all that has been cast out everywhere else, takes refuge here—a step in the downward course to nothing. And all this is within a few yards of the back windows of elegant drawing-rooms, where prosperity indulges in its scarcely enjoyed revels. The aching head of the over-self-indulgent, and the dull bosom of those who, with world's wealth, pine from the very absence of all causes of worldly anxiety, throb within hearing of the curse of drunken despair as it staggers in from the tavern amongst anguished women and terror-stricken children, and the low moans which issue from the death-bed of those who, having only known life as a burden and a pain, are at last visited with one gleam of happiness in the prospect of soon leaving it. Huddled, indeed, is the geography of human bliss (or what is called so) and human wo!

Distinct as is the character of the back street, it is not always one thing; it has different aspects at different times of the day. Pass through it in the morning, and you see it at about its worst, headachey, stiff about the eyes, trying to look unconscious of anything wrong that may have happened over night. The kennels are in no good stile, and the fragments of a broken lamp yet betrew the pavement. Two shops are getting their shutters taken off, one by a girl with a gown not yet fully induced, the other by an old man wearing his nightcap. A cart with buttermilk is an object of general attraction. In the middle of the day things look a little neater. A medical man, who has left his carriage in the neighbouring street, is inquiring his way to a patient. The milk-cart is replaced by a wagon from which coal is sold in sackfuls, and an ass-cart dispenses shovels of haddock and fresh herrings. Few of the ordinary inhabitants are seen in the street. In the evening, again, an entirely new scene is presented. The children, let loose from the schools, throng and fry about. Ten to one, as you go along undreaming of danger, you find yourself suddenly embraced by a skipping-rope, tripped up by a hoop, or hit in the cheek by a ball. The matrons stand in twos and threes at the doors, with dress put somewhat to rights, and knitting or other work in their hands, placidly surveying the sports of the youngsters. One or two of the younger women are seen tripping about with bright new-washed faces and hair excessively in curl, the admiration of journeymen carpenters returning from their work, and the young grocer standing in his door. Meanwhile the sun has edged himself so far round to the north, that

he is able, for once in the day, to send a few of his rays where in general all is dusky. Just at this time the place looks rather well. It is one little term of something like cheerfulness in the gloomy life of our street. But it soon passes away. Night comes, and on its wings brings things, as Thomas Hood says, which again alter the scene. The common sort of shops are now shut, but a chink in the doors of the taverns, and the swing of a bacchanalian chorus heard through the shuttered windows, tell that intemperance is in its full wakefulness. A few miserable women and children chant drearily along the brink of the kennel. One or two groups of drunken brawlers are seen on the point of quarrelling, and sometimes a window is heard suddenly thrust up, and the cry of 'Police!' issued from it in a tone of frantic alarm or indignant fury—too familiar a sound to be much regarded by any one. So concludes the day of back street, to be followed next morning by the same headachey, eye-rubbing, unconscious look as before. And so will this truthful history ever go on; for, however the persons may be changed, the circumstances remain unaffected. And thus it may be that, if you are now revisiting the back street after an interval of a very few years, you see the very same sort of shops, the same sort of houses and people, the appearance of everything the same; yet, in the quick ordination of poverty, the population will have been so entirely changed, that hardly one person living here at the former time is now present. Where have all the hapless gone? Alas! where do they in general go? It might be troublesome to trace the fate of individuals; but of what has befallen them in the mass, it can puzzle no one to form a conjecture.

#### FACTS ABOUT THE CHINESE.

##### SECOND ARTICLE.

A FEW memoranda respecting the geography of China Proper are necessary, to render our facts concerning the Chinese themselves the more intelligible.

China Proper is situated at the south-eastern extremity of the great Asiatic continent, and consists, for the most part, of a series of steppes or table-lands, gradually rising from the shores of the Chinese and Yellow Seas to the western boundary. The coast line extends for 2500 miles, and consists of flats, and of the low hills upon which are grown the finest teas. The further we go inland to the north-west the higher the lands become, till we arrive at the snow-clad summits of the Yun-ling chain—a vast branch of the Himalaya ranges—which marks the western boundary of the country. Tracing the level from the sea in a northerly direction, however, the gradual ascent is interrupted by the great plain of China, which, being 700 miles long, and varying from 150 to 500 broad, is seven times larger than the great plain of Lombardy. The northern limit of China Proper is definitely marked by an artificial barrier 1250 miles long—the well-known great wall of China. What materially contributes to give the country its gradual elevation, is two parallel ranges of hills which intersect it from the north and west—where their height is great—to the east, where it is gradually depressed near the sea. The great extent of mountainous territory supplies China with springs which interlace it with water-courses in every direction. Next to the Amazon and Oroonoco, two of its rivers are the largest in the world—the Hoang-ho, or 'Yellow River,' and the Yang-tse-kiang, or 'Son of the Ocean.' Besides natural water-courses, the indefatigable industry of the people has covered the country with canals, which are so numerous, that, when viewed from the heights of some districts, they appear like a network covering the land. The climate of China,

though of course different in various districts, has been pronounced to be one of extremes, it being in the same localities very hot in summer and very cold in winter. On the whole, however, it appears to be generally favourable to health, and uncommonly so to vegetation. In extent, China Proper occupies an area of 1,348,870 square miles; thus it is eight times greater than France, and eleven times larger than Great Britain.

Of their country, so well-watered, fertile, and productive, the natives are quite as proud as of their constitution, and consider it *perfect*.

Excessive egotism, joined to their intense adoration of antiquity, furnishes the key to those anomalies in the character of the people which have caused so many false notions concerning them to become current in Europe. In the first place, it fully accounts for their contempt for foreigners. Their own territory being capable of furnishing every necessary and luxury of life, they hold themselves quite independent of imports, or any assistance from other nations. As, then, the ancient legislators saw no necessity for intercourse with the rest of the world, they expressly forbade it; and according to the strict letter of Chinese law, a native who leaves his country is punishable with death, should he unwisely return. A stranger, again, who enters China, except with the express sanction of the emperor, and as a 'tribute-bearer' from some submissive nation, is ordained to meet with the same fate. It is treason to hold any intercourse—even to speak to—a foreigner without special license; and six Hong ('trade') merchants are appointed at Canton to transact business with the 'outside people,' or foreigners.

In this exclusiveness we discover a main cause of the vast population of China. Emigration—a great outlet for, and check to, a prolific populace—is thoroughly opposed not only to the law, but to the prejudices of the people; large families and crowded communities being deemed by them amongst Heaven's choicest blessings.

Although the numerical amount of the Chinese population has never been correctly ascertained, yet its unequalled density is undoubted. The few travellers who have been indulged with a sight of the interior of the 'celestial' kingdom, speak with astonishment of the multitudes they saw in the towns and villages, and of the concourse of passengers to be met even on the country roads. Every habitable spot throughout China is built upon, and every rood of ground capable of bearing produce is incessantly cultivated. As if to show that there is not room enough on land for the overgrown populace, the waters are inhabited: houses built in boats, and ranged in long rows or streets, float upon every river and canal, forming aquatic suburbs to the cities, towns, and villages. According to an official census taken by the native government in 1813, China Proper contained 361,693,879 'mouths.' Great doubts, however, have been thrown upon the accuracy of this official census, which is conjectured to be in excess, from the Chinese prejudice in favour of vast numbers. The mode of collecting it is, like everything else in this country, systematic, to a degree, in *theory*, but loose in practice. The whole nation is subdivided into ten Kei, or families; over them is a kind of constable, who must become acquainted with the number of individuals in each family, from a tablet kept by every householder, in which he inscribes the number of inmates. A hundred families constitute a Paon; a similar officer is placed over them. These report the census to the chief officer in the Heen, who again makes his returns to the Foo; thence the document is transmitted to the provincial treasurer, who sends in his statement annually.

to the board of revenue at Pekin; and from these various documents the census is published in the imperial statistics. If the numbers thus collected and stated above be correct, and due deduction be made from the gross area of the kingdom for mountainous and inaccessible tracts, every square mile would be required to sustain 280 individuals.\*

This overcrowded community, drawing the means of life entirely from the land they exist upon, and scorning foreign supplies (the Russian trade by way of Kiatka and the Canton trade being but small exceptions to their grand rule), naturally is anxious to make the most of their country, and the Chinese have always, therefore, been regarded as the most assiduous cultivators. Their industry is unequalled.

Every expedient that ingenuity could at an early period invent, or energy accomplish, has been put in force to make the soil productive; every acre of ground able to bear produce is tilled; fallow and pasture are almost unknown. Water is led, by means of canals, into every district, for the double purpose of transit and irrigation. Roads occasion little loss of room, for these are very narrow, usually consisting of a mere bank raised above the rice-fields, which require at certain seasons to be nearly submerged. But, such as they are, the Chinese roads sufficiently exhibit the patient industry of their makers; for, besides consisting of carefully-constructed embankments, they are mostly paved with flag-stones. As agriculturists, the merits of the Chinese are confined to their industrious personal exertions in the tilling of the soil. With arrangements for increasing production, whether by amassing farms, or by taking advantage of scientific processes, they are entirely unacquainted. Yet such is the effect of their patient and assiduous labours, that the whole territory looks like a collection of gardens.

So great is the struggle for existence in China, that every sort of organic matter is converted into food. To eat everything which can possibly afford nourishment, is the comprehensive principle upon which Chinese diet is regulated. Asses, rats, and mice, invariably form part of butcher's stock; puppies are regularly fed for the shambles; and cats have been seen ticketed up in the Canton market at a higher price than pheasants. Pork is the favourite dish; but the head of an ass is esteemed the greatest delicacy. No aquatic creature escapes the vigilance of a Chinese fisherman; seas, lakes, canals, rivers, pools, and even the furrows of paddy fields, are searched for fish. Less animal food of any kind is, however, eaten in China than elsewhere; and their chief vegetable diet is rice. Large eating is a vice of the upper ranks in China, in consequence, not so much of gourmandise as a vanity attached to the supposition that one is rich enough to command an unusual quantity of victuals. To be fat is held as one of the symptoms of wealth and consequence; and, for the sake of this appearance, respectable men will eat to a degree of excess which to us might appear incredible. Several mandarins who visited the English admiral off Tang-choo, during the late expedition, made a breakfast which astounded the English beholders. One of the visitors, of immense size, 'weighing upwards of thirty stone, upon being questioned as to his powers of consumption, acknowledged with complacency that a sheep was his ordinary allowance for three days.'† The disgusting nature of this vice is made the more glaring, when we reflect that the greater portion of the Chinese public are unable to procure a sufficiency of food; and it is said that thousands of the poorer orders annually die of starvation.

In domestic economy they are unsurpassed: there is no waste, no profusion in any branch, and the most trifling things are turned to advantage—even offals being relished. The plan of *clubbing*, which we recom-

mended in a recent number\* to our own operatives, has been in full operation in China for centuries. The Chinese are unrivalled for their 'clannishness,' and poor families of the same name, be they ever so numerous, join their resources, and often live in the same house. In the sacred instructions of one of their emperors, it is related that 'in the family of Chang-se, of Keang-choo, seven hundred persons partook of the same daily repast.'† Contentment reigns even amongst the most wretched, and they sit down to a meal, consisting of a little boiled grass and potatoes, with cheerfulness, because they know no better.

The habitations of the Chinese prove they deserve the name Mr Davis has given them, of 'incurable conservatives.' They have not altered the shape or plan of their buildings from the earliest time. Those writers who contend that the present race of Chinese are of Tartar origin, point to their houses as one of the proofs of the conjecture; for in shape, however much they may be ornamented, they are precisely similar to a Tartar tent. 'A Chinese city,' says a learned writer, 'is nothing more than a Tartar camp, surrounded by mounds of earth to preserve themselves and cattle from the depredations of neighbouring tribes; and a Chinese habitation is the Tartar tent, with its sweeping roof supported by poles, excepting that the Chinese have case their walls with brick, and tiled the roofs of their houses.'‡ Everything in the country being regulated by law, the building of houses forms no exception to the rule. The habitations of the poor depend chiefly upon the nature of the materials to be procured nearest at hand. Millions of people live in mud hovels, but of these a great number are faced with brick; while in places where granite abounds, the cabins are composed of solid rock, which they possess great skill in cutting and joining, so that a seam is hardly visible. In woody districts, huts are built of planks. But there is no material so much in use as bamboo, not only for building purposes, but for every other: the tender shoots of the plant, when boiled, form a favourite article of food; furniture is made of it; and, in short, a long and not uninteresting article might be written on the uses to which the bamboo is put by the Chinese. They perform a series of superstitious ceremonies on beginning to build, and always commence with the hearth, though, with all their ancestors' wisdom, they overlooked chimneys; and for modern architects to add such conveniences now, would be flat impertinence. Fires, however, are seldom used except for cooking, the requisite warmth in winter being supplied by fur clothing. The interior of a Chinese pauper's house consists of one room, to serve every purpose both for his family and domestic animals, amongst which a pig is always to be seen. The interior of a Chinese and an Irish cabin resemble each other in many respects.

The houses of the rich are surrounded with, and concealed by, high stone walls, and never exceed two storeys in height; so that nothing surprises a Chinese more than pictures or descriptions of the five and six-storeyed houses of European cities. Mr Davis reports that the present emperor inquired whether it was the smallness of our territories which compelled us to build so near the clouds? The magnificence of Chinese mansions is estimated in some measure by the ground which they cover; but much of this is often occupied by complicated passages. At the entrance within the stone wall is a space occupied by flower-pots, and often a small garden laid out with artificial rocks and mountains. The principal hall generally faces the south; and its walls are adorned with inscriptions, either drawn upon a lacquered plank with gilt letters, or written upon paper. This is the place of devotion, or hall of ancestors; for the religion of the Chinese seems chiefly to consist of a worship of their forefathers. An

\* According to the imperial statistics, the cultivated land of China Proper extends over 1,257,900 square miles.

† Lord Jocelyn's Six Months in China.

\* A Hint to the Working Classes, No. 10, new series.

† Quoted by Mr Davis in his 'Chinese,' vol. ii. p. 406.

‡ Encyclopaedia Britannica, article 'China.'

idol and incense-stand is nearly always found in the principal room of a respectable Chinese. The temporary residence of the governor of Chusan, during the short time we held that island, was at the chief city, Tinghai, and is thus described by Lord Jocelyn:—‘It was believed to have been the property of a literary character, and was, when first opened, the wonder and admiration of all. The different apartments open round the centre court, which is nearly tiled; the doors, window-frames, and pillars that support the pent-roof are carved in the most chaste and delicate style; and the interior of the ceiling and wainscot are lined with a fret-work, which it must have required the greatest neatness and care to have executed.’ In a house near Nankin, another traveller was struck with the beauty of the partitions, which consisted of trellis-work, covered with delicate gauze. ‘The passage between two of the “fragrant” (or women’s) apartments consisted of imitations in a rich dark-coloured wood of an avenue of young bamboos, their graceful branches entwining overhead to form the arch, and their taper stems encircled by creepers, which cling to them in the most tasteful and picturesque manner conceivable.’ Most of the bed-places in the sleeping apartments for ladies, which were observed by the invaders, were less beds than large dormitories. A portion of the apartment, about eight feet square, is partitioned off, having a circular sliding panel by which to enter. The exterior of these partitions is often sumptuously carved, gilt, and ornamented. In the inside is a large couch, covered with a soft mat, hung with rich draperies and bullion silk tassels; this, with a little chair and table, makes up all the furniture of these elegant but ill-ventilated dormitories. The beds of people of middle rank are formed of hard planks covered with a mat, the pillow generally an oblong leather box in which they preserve their valuables. In winter a great many blankets are used, but no sheets; for it is remarkable that, unlike other orientals, the Chinese use scarcely any bed, table, or even body linen. When a house is of two storeys, it is the upper one which contains the ‘fragrant’ apartments, otherwise they are situated close to the great hall. The windows consist almost always of oiled paper; very little glass being used in China; though shutters are sometimes made of pearl-oyster shells sufficiently clear to admit light. To country houses, gardens and artificial landscapes are indispensable; and few are without tanks or ponds, filled with quantities of the golden and silver carp, and overspread with the broad leaves of the nelumbium, or sacred lotus.

In towns, the narrow streets are chiefly occupied by tradesmen’s shops, some of which are loaded with ornament. The sign-boards hang out at right angles to the house, as they formerly did amongst ourselves, and are of the most gaudy and alluring description; for the puffing system in retail trading appears to have been extensively practised in China, when it was quite unknown in the western world. The vista these splendid advertisements form on looking down a street, present a most singular and lively appearance. In some of the shops the public are warned, by sentences conspicuously pasted up, not to gossip, and assured by others that ‘they don’t cheat here.’

To dress, the Chinese attach great importance, and the costume of every grade is strictly superintended by the board of rites and ceremonies. The lower orders generally wear an untanned sheep-skin jerkin and cloth nether garments. But as the grade of life gets higher, the dress increases in splendour. The summer clothing of the upper ranks is a long loose gown, or gaberdine, of thin silk or gauze, sometimes confined to the waist by a girdle, the sleeves loose, and the neck bare. The breeches are of the Dutch kind, being of most ample dimensions. Woven stockings of cotton or silk cover the legs; and cloth, satin, or velvet boots protect the feet. The soles are very thick, on account of the leather

not being sufficiently well tanned to exclude wet, without a great many layers; and the broad edges are kept clean with whiting, instead of blacking. In winter, fur jackets and leggings are added to the summer clothing. When the change of costume shall take place, is not dependent upon individual convenience, but on legal custom, and it is indicated by the cap, of which there is one for each season. On the commencement of the cold or hot weather, the viceroy of each province puts on his winter or summer cap. This important circumstance is noticed in the official gazette, and is the signal for every man under his government to make the same change.\* The summer cap is a cone of bamboo or chip, covered with a large quantity of red horse-hair, or with silken threads; at the apex is the button, which denotes the rank of the wearer. The winter head-gear is a dome of velvet or fur, with a broad brim sharply turned up—like the loose cuff of a coat—all round. Some of the ceremonial dresses are very splendid and costly, being of expensive silk elaborately embroidered with gold. Fur dresses are many of them of such value and strength, that they descend from father to son; hence some Chinese possess a large quantity of them, their stock being added to from that of deceased relatives. Mr Davis relates, that at an entertainment at Canton, where the party, according to the custom of the country, were seated in a room without fires, the European guests began to complain of cold, upon which the host immediately accommodated the whole number, ten or twelve, with hand-some wide-sleeved spencers, all of the most costly furs, saying that he had plenty more in reserve. As the Chinese seldom change their under-clothing, they are personally uncleanly, and subject to cutaneous diseases.

The respectable Chinese wear many articles of convenience appended at the girdle, as swords, daggers, and pistols are, or have been worn, in Europe. Not the least conspicuous of these is a fan enclosed in a silk sheath, an article required both for coolness and as a direct protection in summer from the rays of the sun. One of the most ludicrous sights which our countrymen encountered in China, was presented by a visitor to one of our ships—a Chinese cavalry officer, who kept fanning himself from the moment he got on deck. A purse, often elegantly embroidered, a case holding a flint, steel, and tobacco for lighting a pipe, a variety of tooth and ear-picks, and a watch-pocket, are other articles usually carried in this manner by a Chinese of rank.

The following summary of the general appearance of the houses and costumes of the Chinese when collected in a town, was drawn up by an eye-witness:—The general appearance of every large Chinese town fully bears out its Tartar origin; for a stranger admitted into Pekin, Nankin, or Canton, may fancy himself—from the low houses with curved overhanging roofs, uninterrupted by a single chimney—from the numerous pillars, and from the flags and streamers placed before the door of every official—in a Tartar encampment. The scene is full of animation:—the glitter of the painting, gilding, and varnishing which everywhere meets his eye, together with the gaily-ornamented lanterns of horn, muslin, silk, and paper, that hang over the doors—the confused noises of perambulating tinkers and blacksmiths in their little portable workshops—the buying, selling, and bartering—the bursts of laughter occasioned by jugglers, conjurors, quack-doctors, and comedians—the mirth produced by men carrying home their newly-married wives, accompanied by bands of music—the howlings of mourners burying the dead—the magistrates, attended by their lictors and officers, parading the town—with now and then the procession of some man high in office, who is escorted by persons bearing flags, umbrellas, painted lanterns, and other strange insignia of office—this combination of sights

and sounds presents a spectacle which can be beheld nowhere but in China.

Having cleared the way by stating these general particulars of the Chinese and their country, we shall, in a succeeding article, take a nearer view of their social condition, ceremonies, and national customs.

#### EBEN ELSHENDER, THE MOOR-FARMER.

**EBENEZER ALEXANDER**, or, as he was usually called, Eben Eshender, a native of the north of Scotland, was originally a manufacturer, but not being successful in this line, and falling into low spirits, he went to spend some time at a village where an elder and more prosperous brother had a bleaching establishment, in the hope of recovering the tone of his mind by means of country air and exercise. The place seemed at first sight unlikely to cheer up an invalid of the mind, being situated in a high and sterile district, with a north-east exposure, and far from all other human haunts; but things turned out much better than might have been expected, and we shall tell how this came about.

Eben, in his wanderings in the neighbourhood, was speedily attracted to a hollow in the neighbouring moorlands, which might be considered as the only place within several miles presenting the least charm for the eye; a brook, fringed by a line of willows and a strip of green, formed the simple elements of the scene, and from its situation it had a look of seclusion and warmth. He was led, by what he saw here, to surmise that elevation is not an insuperable difficulty in cultivation, provided there be shelter; and soon becoming convinced of the fact, his active mind in no long time conceived that he might employ himself worse than in endeavouring to clear a little possession for himself, at a nominal rent, out of the neighbouring lands. He looked around, but, excepting the few patches in the neighbourhood of the village, the region was one either of unbroken heath or of moss of great depth, broken into pits, and filled with water even at midsummer. Nothing, therefore, could seem more hopeless. On the left only, as he looked northward, a large flat, lying far beneath him, and black and barren, or covered with brown heath, but looking to the sun, seemed to offer the semblance of a cultivated field, and he determined to visit it. He did so, but found it very unpromising. The surface, though apparently smooth at a distance, was rough and uneven; the soil was either stony and shallow, or a deep quick moss, wet everywhere even in summer, and with no fall by which it might be drained. A rivulet skirted it on the east, and was the natural boundary in that direction; but a swell many feet in height rose on the bank, and closed in the surface of the proposed farm from almost the possibility of being drained; and there were similar embankments on the north and west. Still it was a large surface, not materially uneven; it lay beautifully to the sun, and he could not but think that, if drained, and sheltered, and cultivated, here might be an extensive, perhaps a valuable farm. It would not require deep cuttings, as in moss-flows, nor extensive levellings, as in very unequal surfaces. He determined to think farther.

He spoke of his purpose to no one, but he brooded over it for days, again and again visiting the ground, and at last he waited on the agent of the proprietor. Even from him he exacted a promise of secrecy, if nothing should follow upon his offer; and then, for a lease of thirty years, offered a shilling an acre for four hundred acres of that unbroken waste, with power to renew his lease for thirty years more, if he should so incline, at five shillings per acre; but with liberty, also, to quit at the end of five years, without being liable in damages from any cause.

Many landlords seem to fancy that though land is of no value in their hands, they have yet a right to be sharers in the profits produced by the intelligence, labour, and capital of others; and that they are extremely liberal in forbearing to share for a few years in what

had never existed for them, and yet will, at the end of those few years, be a valuable inheritance to them and their heirs for ever. The landlord in the present case was wiser. He saw that he was about to receive immediately, for a small portion of this moor in cultivation, almost as much as the entire moor brought as an inferior sheep-walk, and that at the end of thirty years it would exceed the original income of the entire possession; while this attempt at cultivation, if successful, would be an example of the utmost value, and might give his village that neighbourhood which it so much required. Not only, therefore, was the offer of our friend accepted, but wood for buildings was voluntarily offered, and a proper allowance for useful and well-constructed drains.

The villagers were astounded to hear that they were to obtain such a neighbour, but happy even in the hope of it. Enclosed as the place was by banks, which, instead of admitting it to be drained, would, if broken down, inundate it with water, it looked to them like a huge frying-pan, and of course there was no abstaining from some little quiet jokes. This last was indeed the worst aspect of the affair. There was a fall for draining within the farm, but not without it; there was no final outlet. Still, our friend determined on pursuing his experiment; and, as a first measure, determined to give his possession a good name: he called it *Glen-Eden*!

He next marked off the site for his steading on a very slight but bare and valueless knoll, being desirous at once to sit dry and to spare his good land if there were any. As he felt that nothing would be more apt to encourage him than the comfort of his home, as soon as his turf-cottage was roofed in, he had a floor laid down in one end of it, and raising up slight ribs of wood by the walls, and continuing them overhead, had the whole neatly covered by a thin boarding, which, with the addition of a little carpet and a slight curtain festooned over his couch—

A couch ordained a double debt to pay:

A couch by night, a sofa all the day—

made his end of the tenement seem a palace, and enabled him to look on the storm or the sunshine with equal consciousness of snugness and security to health. Good fires soon made the other end very tolerable to his servants; and being washed with lime, though not plastered, it formed a very cheerful temporary residence. He had the rankest of the heath pulled and secured for thatch or fuel, intending to burn the rest on the ground as soon as the ground should be dry. He next laid out the fields, and ordered them to be cleared of stones—an operation that covered them in some places to the depth of several feet; and finally, he set himself to endeavour to lay the land dry.

For this last purpose, at the lowest part of the farm, but where the surrounding wall, as it may be termed, was highest (and this was on the east), he ordered a bank of moss to be dug out, and placed in situation convenient for being dried and burned. In the course of this digging he came upon both stones and clay, treasures of great value in his circumstances; and lest the winter, by filling the pond with water, should render further digging impossible, he pursued his labours with great assiduity. His determination was, that this reservoir should afford him an opportunity of draining the land; and should it prove unequal to this, that a pump or pumps, to be worked by a small windmill, should raise the water to a height enabling him to send it off his territories. In the meantime he knew what ridicule the suspicion even of such a project would draw upon him, and therefore he gratified inquirers by informing them that he was forming a fish-pond for the residence, and even expected to draw profit from the ice in winter, by letting it out for curling, though the game was not then known in that part of Scotland; and the parties, breathing softly, turned from him, and gently lifting up their hands and eyes, departed. Meantime he was intersecting his fields in numerous directions by drains, leading them into one another, diverging, branch-

ing, and every way varying them according to the inequalities of the ground; and after proving their running, carefully filling them with the stones taken from the surface, and all tending at last to the general reservoir. Even in winter, therefore, the land became drier and drier, and people now began to see the use of the pond. By the return of spring he had effectually drained a large space in front of his residence, and generally prepared it for the operation of the plough. And even in this, by a sort of natural instinct, he differed from the accustomed mode. Aware that oxen draw most gently and steadily, he had secured the temporary use of a strong yoke of these, to be tried in all such portions of the soil as seemed likely to be capable of being opened up by the plough. People from the village had been engaged to attend at the same time to complete, with the spade and other implements, what the plough might leave imperfectly done, and give him, if possible, a field; and they had by this time so entered into the spirit of the thing, that the attendance was large, and in many cases gratuitous. He had no lime for the present; but he had been scavenger to the village during winter, and he had secured all the runnings from his own cattle in a great tank. He now set to burning, in close kilns, all the turf he had been able to accumulate during the summer; and between these and the refuse of the few cattle for which he had been able to find food, he was enabled to plough and manure some twenty acres of land, which he sowed and planted with the usual crops, accompanying all the white crops with sown grass. To complete his experiment, he had procured a cask to carry out the runnings of his stables, &c.; and having placed it on a cart, and fitted it with a tail-box pierced with holes, such as is used for watering streets and roads, he, as a last operation, sprinkled this liquor, so far as it would go, over the ground that had been dressed with ashes, at night, that no portion of it might be wasted by the sun; and so closed the labours of his first spring.

Science had not then disclosed to us, what is now known to be true, that the terms good and bad land, as generally understood, are expressions without meaning, as almost every species of land requires some culture to make it productive; and by suitable means much may be made of almost any kind of land. Neither was it then known, as it now is, what are the precise ingredients necessary to the production of the various crops, and to which the soil is a mere matrix or receiver; and that burned earth or lime, and ammonia or the runnings of stables, and other usual manures, contain many of those necessary ingredients. But by instinct or accident, by reasoning from what he had noticed, or heard, or read, and perhaps so far experimenting without much knowledge or expectation, our friend had hit upon many things now known to be useful, and the result surprised many. Not only was there no failure in the crops of Glen-Eden (as they now began seriously to call it), but they were rich and beautiful. The oats, standing upon moss of great depth but drained—and that but for the draining and manure would not have borne a green leaf—were as luxuriant as if the depth of the moss had been the cause of their excellence. The other soils, lately so thin and dead, were now deep and dry, and bearing excellent barley, with a flush of clover about its roots. Potatoes, the gift of a warm and distant region, were flourishing in their little beds on this lately cold and barren moor, as if it had been their native and appropriate soil; and, in short, industry and intelligence had in a few months triumphed over the ignorance and neglect of centuries.

Till these things became apparent, however, our experimenter kept in the shade. He had dismissed all his workers, except his hind, whom he termed his 'resident manager,' and his wife, who was his sole servant, and a Gibeonite of a boy for looking after his sheep. As the crops began to show themselves, his hind urged upon him the beauty of their appearance, and the almost certain success of his experiment, and consequently the duty of resuming operations. According to all appear-

ances, his first crop would more than pay the expense that would give him a permanent and valuable possession; and as Eben inclined to this opinion, he determined to resume. As a proper preparative to this, he allowed his mother and sisters to visit him; and though they were shocked with the outward aspect of his residence, a black and cheerless-looking turf-hut, in the midst of a comparative wild, and guarded by a pet sheep and her lambs, that, as they approached, patted the ground in a very menacing manner, yet when they entered it, and found the servant cheerfully preparing for them a meal in the one end, while in the other was a little parlour such as a gentleman might inhabit with rest and enjoyment, they were not only surprised and pleased, but would gladly have protracted their visit, and were delighted to understand that they were speedily to join him.

Of course, from greater experience he rose to greater success. Even his labourers worked more cheerfully from seeing the success of what had been done. Moss that had hitherto seemed a nuisance was to him a treasure, and husbanded accordingly; and stones that, above ground, were such an encumbrance, were, when placed in drains beneath it, of the utmost value. He became perfectly happy in his labour of improving, and almost regretted to think that one day it must have an end. Thirty years have passed since these operations were begun; the barren moor has been reclaimed into a valuable and productive farm; the once bare and rugged banks that impeded its draining have long been turned into boundaries covered with herbage of the softest texture, and crowned with woods at once an ornament and a shelter, and that being to be paid for, will render their owner rich. Even the deep and unsightly pool, that first assisted in laying the land dry, has been surrounded and screened by willows and alders, both useful in their way; and from the numbers of ducks and geese constantly breeding on its borders and floating on its bosom, must add no inconsiderable item to the profits of the farm. Where the first damp and disheartening turf-shed was erected, there are now warm and substantial offices; and fronting all, and flanked by garden walls, and behind them trees, stands a farmhouse, in its first days a cottage, but always the seat of plain abundance, and now of every comfort and a generous hospitality. Though in a climate not very genial, it is always warm; and from various flowering shrubs spread over it, seldom without flowers. It is the cherished residence of an industrious, ingenious, and very worthy man.

Many, stimulated by his success, soon followed his example, though on a less extensive scale; but the unprospective wild of thirty years ago is now a sheltered, cultivated, and comparatively fertile spot, and the abode of many industrious and contented families.

#### HELP YOURSELF.

##### A TALE.

On the banks of the Severn, about half a mile from Worcester, there stands in the midst of a green, sloping towards the river, a small but neat-looking cottage. At the time to which the commencement of this little history refers, the spot was scarcely in a state of cultivation. No fences guarded the immediate approaches to the dwelling, and the grass grew wild and unweeded. Still, the profusion of creepers which clung around the porch, and two circular patches of earth that had been dug up before it, showed that some little pains had been bestowed to give the neglected plot a civilised appearance.

One sunny morning during a recent autumn, an angler in a small boat stationed himself immediately opposite to the cottage, under pretence of fishing; but his eyes were more frequently fixed on the door of the humble dwelling than on his float. After some hours of anxious watching, he was rewarded with a sight of the object he had shown so much patience in endeavouring

to see—a young and handsome girl came forth, and began collecting a number of flowers, and arranging them carefully in small bouquets. At the same moment, however, a good-sized salmon was nearly running away with the angler's tackle; and it was not till he felt the rod nearly tugged from his grasp, that he was conscious of his good fortune. His attention being thus divided between the fish and the lady, he lost both; for the salmon got clear off, and the girl retired into the cottage without the word of greeting he had intended to address to her.

'What a fool I am!' exclaimed the angler, 'to be wasting my time here, lying in wait for opportunities of seeing her, when there is nothing whatever to prevent my going boldly up to her door, and paying a regular visit.' He then paused a while to supply a length of gut to his line. 'Why, the fact is, I have not the courage, and that is the truth of it. Besides, she is always so busy with her painting, and it is a sin to disturb her. Then, again, she is alone very likely; and I know she never asks one in when that is the case. However, if she does not come out again soon, I certainly will make bold to call at the cottage.'

While the angler was muttering these words to himself, a dialogue, of which he was the subject, was going on in the cottage-parlour. There were two girls seated at a small table, busily employed in copying on China the bouquets just gathered from the miniature garden; for Jane Lambton, who was the hostess, gained her livelihood by her skill in that humble department of art. Her companion was a neighbouring clergyman's daughter, who occasionally visited her, and lent her a helping hand for amusement.

'Surely,' said Emilia Mason, 'that man in the boat must be young Thomas Polter, the attorney's son. I wonder what makes him choose this spot so often to fish in.'

'Perhaps,' replied Jane archly, 'you would rather he took his station now and then a little higher up the river, and a little nearer to a certain back-window of the parsonage.'

'Oh, Jane! how can you say such a thing. I am sure I never dreamed a wish of the sort.'

'Then I am sorry I put it into your head,' replied Jane laughing; 'for the mere suspicion of it makes you blush as red as this vermillion.'

Emilia Mason did in reality betray more emotion than the allusion warranted; and presently, when footsteps were heard approaching the cottage, she exclaimed, 'Bless me! I hope he is not coming to disturb us!' with an expression of fright and hope which was perfectly intelligible to her companion. Jane, however, betrayed an anxiety of another kind, and trusted the angler was not going to intrude on them. On looking out, however, she saw him still in his boat.

A moment after, the outer door was opened, and a young man hastened into the little parlour with eagerness and haste. He saluted Jane with much more cordiality than her friend; and his looks seemed to express disappointment that the former was not alone.

'I have come, Jane,' he said, 'to tell you something of consequence which has happened to me.'

'Then perhaps I am in the way,' said Emilia, rising.

'Not at all, Miss Mason,' replied Jane Lambton; 'there is nothing Mr Barnton can have to say which you may not hear.'

'But it concerns my own private affairs,' added the young man.

This was so strong a hint, that the young lady retired, and was shortly afterwards observed in close conversation with the fisherman, who had by this time landed.

The moment she left the cottage, Edward Barnton seized Jane's hand. He was much agitated, and exclaimed, 'Alas! all our hopes are disappointed. My uncle still refuses to do anything for me.'

The moment Jane could release her hand, she went

on with her painting with a degree of composure not at all in accordance with the excited state of her companion. He repeated what he had just said, adding, that Jane could not possibly understand the extent of his misfortune, or she would sympathise more warmly with him.

'On that point, Edward,' she replied, 'you know I cannot sympathise with you. You are always speaking of depending on your friends instead of on yourself.'

'Are they not bound to see me placed in a sphere of life to which I was born?'

'They have done all they can to do so already. They have given you a good education, and furnished you with opportunities for making your way in the world, yet you never use them.'

'Why should I?' he replied, a little tartly, 'when my uncle, the county member, might get me a government situation by asking for it.' Here young Barnton paused. He again took Jane's hand, and after much hesitation, proposed to her that they should marry at once, for he was quite certain that when his relations saw the new responsibility he had undertaken, they would the more readily exert themselves in his favour.

Whatever feelings of grief and unhappiness this proposal inwardly caused Jane Lambton, she did not exhibit them, but merely withdrew her hand, and resumed her task. It cost her, however, a mighty effort to suppress her fast-rising tears. When she had sufficiently mastered them, she spoke. 'Edward,' she said, turning her eyes full towards her lover, 'you think me cold, unsympathising, unfeeling, because I have invariably opposed your impracticable schemes for the future. That which you have just proposed I must reject decisively, and not without some feeling of indignation. It gives me more pain than all your former plans, wild as they have appeared.'

'Wild only to you,' replied Edward, stung with disappointment, 'who are worldly-minded, and, I must add, selfish!'

This was too much from one deeply, though rationally in love. Jane burst into tears; but Barnton, foiled in his intentions, and smarting under the bitter disappointment his uncle had that morning inflicted on him, heeded not the anguish he now caused, except to augment it. And unhappily for both, it was in this mood that Barnton—impulsive, easily-excited young man as he was—left the cottage.

When it was perceived that he had departed, Miss Mason rejoined her friend, with Polter. The sorrow which so fully betrayed itself in Jane's countenance took a widely different effect on the two visitors. Emilia was all sympathy and kindness, while Polter seemed perfectly bewildered and perplexed by it. 'So,' he thought, 'it is as they told me; Barnton is the lucky man after all, and I may pack up my tackle, row home, and never return to this spot again, for any chance I may have of making my way in Jane Lambton's regard. Poor girl! something has annoyed her. I'll ask her to accept a dish of the fish I have caught this morning.'

This intention was carried into effect on the appearance of old Mary, Jane's factotum and housekeeper; and Polter having gallantly offered to row Miss Mason up the river to the parsonage in his boat, left the lady so much, but so vainly admired, to solitude, often the best balm for sorrow.

Had a stranger observed Jane Lambton when left to herself, he would have perhaps been inclined to agree with the harsh opinion of her lover—that her disposition was phlegmatic; for all external signs of grief had passed away, and she went on painting with increased rather than relaxed diligence. Yet her thoughts were more busy than her hands. She mentally retraced her past and history, to justify herself—though unnecessarily—for her repeated refusals to participate in the headlong course proposed by the being whom she loved with

enduring sincerity. The daughter of a gentleman, who had been ruined by a dissipated and wicked brother, she was, at the age of twenty, left—if we except the cottage and the small plot of ground which surrounded it—quite destitute. While her parents were alive, an attachment had sprung up between her and Edward Barnton, who was the son of a neighbouring proprietor. At that time it was thought she would have a good fortune; yet when, on the demise of her parents, the contrary was discovered, Edward's affection for her seemed to increase, and this, perhaps, strengthened her already strong affection for him. Her disposition was one of high principle and unwearied industry; and, contrary to the advice of her neighbours, she persisted in taking shelter under the only roof to which she had a right, and in obtaining her livelihood by an art which, in happier hours, she practised as an accomplishment. A life of dependence was quite uncongenial to her nature, and happy would it have been if her lover had been imbued with the same spirit.

In Jane's strong mind, however, sorrow seldom dwelt long, and the next morning she had manifestly recovered her usual composure. But her affection was doomed to receive a new and severe shock. She received a letter from Edward, in which his reproach of selfish coldness was not only repeated, but others added even more unkind and unfounded. He had heard, he said, of Polter's admiration of her, and doubted not that she thought him a better match than one with blasted and uncertain prospects. He bade her farewell. He was going to London, and would at last take the worldly advice she had so frequently given: he would endeavour to 'help himself,' by turning his attention and talents to literature.

Bitter, unkind, and undeserved as this letter was, Jane softened its effects by framing every possible excuse for her lover. Disappointment, she argued, had soured him, and he would in cooler moments reflect on what he had written, and retract it. She was, however, glad that he had at last made up his mind to exert his own energies, instead of constantly dancing attendance on the patronage and interest of his friends, as he had unwisely done for several years.

On the other hand, a proper sense of her own worthiness came to her aid, to point out that it would be highly inexpedient to receive Barnton again on the same footing as formerly, even were he to repent of his unkindness, until some decided change had taken place not only in his sentiments, but in his circumstances. She therefore, in her reply to his letter, simply disclaimed the feelings he imputed to her, and congratulated him on his resolution of depending on himself more than he had hitherto done. She declined his visits in future—at all events for a time—and the letter concluded with these remarkable words:—'You who have known all my misfortunes, must know my heart better than to suppose me capable of disregarding you in the hour of your affliction and disappointment. I am not ashamed to own that my affection for you is unchanged; but a change is necessary in your sentiments ere we might hope for happiness, even under the most favourable circumstances. That change you are about, you say, to effect. Go! I know it will be for your good, and have made a resolve, in which I fervently intreat your concurrence: it is not to see or communicate with you for twelve months. At the end of that time we will meet, either to be united, or to part—for ever!'

Edward, who had more of romance than of practical sense in his composition, readily agreed to this proposal in a farewell letter he sent to Jane. Next day he departed, to stem the strong current of life's stream which sets in against the unknown and unenergetic stranger in the overwhelming metropolis.

From the day of the separation, Jane Lambton and Edward Barnton trod their respective but opposite paths in the walk of life; that of the girl smoothed by peaceful energy and unflinching self-dependence, that of the young man made, by his peculiar dispositions,

rugged and uneven—now sinking into a valley of despair, now raised on a summit of hope. In this way six months of the probationary twelve passed away.

It will be remembered, that during the February of the year before last there was some severe weather. Much snow fell, and the little plot of ground which surrounded Jane's cottage was nearly hidden by it. Still, it was not thick enough to conceal the improvements which had recently taken place. Fences had been put up and the two flower-plots removed to make a little lawn before the porch, the flowers being transplanted to a more genial situation behind the cottage, where a regular garden was formed. One evening about the end of the month Mr Mason and his daughter left the parsonage, and, guided by the dim light which appeared in the cottage window, traced their way amidst the snow to Jane's dwelling. On entering it, they found her painting with her usual assiduity.

'You really must forgive me,' she said, after the first greetings were over, and her visitors were seated, 'but I am obliged to be rude. I must go on with my task, and talk the while, for there is not a moment to be lost. This biscuit\* must be finished for the furnace by to-morrow morning.'

'Why "must," Jane?' asked the clergyman, 'for well I know that one piece is of little use until the whole set be completed. Do not blush, for I know all about it; Emily has told me. You want to purchase something at the sale to-morrow. Now, suppose you leave off work at once, and let us all three trudge to town to-morrow morning, and make the best bargain we can. This day-week will do as well for Lord Bollington's dinner-service as to-morrow.'

'But——' stammered the blushing artist.

'I will allow you to finish any sentence that begins with "but,"' interposed Emily. 'You must obey your spiritual pastor even in things temporal; so drop your pencil, miss, and listen. He has come on purpose to scold you. Pray begin, papa.'

'All I would say, Jane, is simply in the way of caution respecting your unremitting exertions. Believe me, such constant application is a very bad economy of time. This light, which we can see from our parlour windows, betrays the late and early hours you keep; and I am sure you will ruin your health, and soon be able to do nothing at all.'

'Well,' Jane replied, 'I will promise reform; only let me transgress this once.'

'There is no necessity for it,' said Emily; 'if you will only be a little more like a friend, and accept the proposal I made this morning.'

'Not for the world,' answered Jane; 'would you take from me all the pleasure I derive from my exertions? If I were to allow you to lend me, even for a day, the money to buy what I have set my heart upon, I should not value it in the least. No no, my dear kind friends; let me only finish this little task, and get my reward for it, and I will promise reform.'

'I perceive you are incorrigible,' said the clergyman, seeing her resume her pencil.

'So now, as our mission is ended, we will leave you to your task,' said Emily rising. 'Do not rise, as you are so greedy of your minutes; old Mary will light us out. Good night, dear Jane,' continued her young friend heartily, as they shook hands; 'may Heaven reward your labours!'

'Amen!' exclaimed the pastor, with a sigh so deep that Jane was startled. Emily had left the room, and Mr Mason, on taking Jane's hand, said, with a deeply-sorrowful expression, 'I sincerely pray that all your toils will be repaid in the way you wish.'

'Have you a doubt, then?' asked the girl with anxious eagerness. 'Have you heard anything? Is he——'

'I have heard,' was the hasty reply; 'but nothing fatal, or even alarming. Hope for the best; but be ever prepared for the worst. Time, the best physician for

\* The technical name of porcelain when in a state for painting on.

wayward as well as for sorrowing hearts, will perhaps bring all to a happy result. Good night.'

When left alone, Jane gave way to the agitation which Mr Mason's last words were calculated to produce. The agreement not to correspond having been rigidly kept, she was in total ignorance of Barnton's proceedings and circumstances, and eagerly caught at the least glimmer of intelligence respecting them. She knew that her friends at the parsonage were fully aware of the goal to which she desired to hasten. She had laboured with unceasing assiduity to make for herself a *home*—one, indeed, which might be rendered capable of being shared by another, should his career prove at the end of the twelvemonth as successful as her own. Alas! the hint which had been just dropped tended to lessen this hope, and Jane's bitter emotions could only find relief in tears. She did not, however, relax in her labours, and retired not to rest till her task was finished.

The next day Jane took home her painting, received the money for it, made her purchase (which was a quaint old writing-desk), and returned to the cottage. She seemed to attach a strange value to this article of furniture, for, when it arrived, she placed it with her own hands in a room concerning which many mysterious surmises had gone abroad. She always kept it locked, and no person but herself—not even her old housekeeper—was allowed to enter it. She, however, passed every hour she could spare from sleep and labour in this mysterious apartment. The windows were closed, except a small aperture at the top, and a hundred conjectures about Jane Lambton and her secluded little room soon floated about the neighbourhood; not one of the persevering attempts to fish out the secret, which had been made, having succeeded. Whenever the subject was alluded to, Jane invariably changed it, and betrayed so much embarrassment, that questions were seldom pressed. One thing was, however, certain, that the room was in the course of being gradually furnished, for every now and then there was brought to the cottage a curious old chair, an odd-looking table, or a parcel of books in bindings of a bygone fashion, which Jane seemed to have purchased out of her earnings; and these must have been deposited in the mysterious sanctum, for they were never seen in any other part of the house. So close a secret did Jane keep everything relating to this little room, that she never made allusion to it, even to her friends the Masons.

At length an uncertain light was thrown on the dim mystery. The carrier reported that he was ordered to call one morning for a parcel for London. This set curiosity on tiptoe to know what kind of a parcel it could be, and the carrier was watched; but nothing satisfactorily elicited. All that could be seen was a flat square box, directed to some unknown person in London.

It was, however, remarked, that after the despatch of this box, Jane took more relaxation, and worked less. Her spirits were lighter, her eye brighter, and her disposition more cheerful. Emilia Mason, who continued occasionally to assist her in her daily tasks, remarked that she performed them with more alacrity than formerly; but she forbore to question her friend on the change, as the subject was evidently painful, so she contented herself with guesses. 'It is clear,' she thought, 'that this improvement in Jane's spirits is in some way connected with the mysterious chamber, for she seldom goes into it now.'

One morning Emilia came rather earlier than usual. She appeared much agitated; not painfully so, but in a curious kind of half-pleasurable half-disagreeable flutter. She had something of consequence to tell her confidant, 'for,' she added archly, 'I keep no secrets from you, dear Jane.'

'Though you would imply I am not so generous,' returned Jane. 'But be patient; you shall know all in time.'

'You shall know all now,' said Emilia; 'for, last evening, what do you think happened? George Polter came, and—'

'Well, and what?' asked Jane, anxiously filling up the blank of her friend's hesitation.

'And—and—took tea with us.'

'Very likely; for I am told he does that almost every evening. But what else did he do?'

'Why,' said Emilia, struggling as hard as she could against some strong emotion—he told me—here the poor girl's feelings overcame her, and bursting into tears, she fell on her friend's neck, and murmured—'he said he loved me!'

Jane had great difficulty in restraining her own tears, but wisely fought against them by an attempt at pleasantry.

'Then,' she said laughing, 'he is a false traitor!—for have you not told me that I was at one time the object of his admiration?'

'So you were; and it was from his conversing with me of that admiration, and from my so truly sympathising with it, that when he found your heart entirely preoccupied, his affection for me sprung up. He owned this last night.'

'But what will Mr Mason say about it?'

'Alas! Jane, I tremble to think. It may be very wrong; but I always loved George Polter; and if my father should refuse his consent, I shall be wretched.'

A new circumstance soon occurred to break off this interesting topic. The postman arrived with a letter having a large official-looking seal. It was now Jane's turn to be agitated. She broke it with a trembling hand, read the first line, and clasping her hands, looked upward, in the attitude of one at prayer. She exclaimed, 'Thank God!' and sank into a chair, weeping for joy.

We must now change the scene to London, and advance the course of events to the 1st of May. It is on that remarkable day that the exhibition of pictures is opened. Crowds of artists, amateurs, and critics of all denominations assemble in the rooms of the Royal Academy, anxious to get an early glimpse of the labours of native talent during the past year. On this occasion the day happened to be wet, and not so many persons as usual visited the rooms, but they still contained what may be called a crowd. Mixing with this motley but generally well-dressed assembly, was one individual who presented a contrast to it. His clothes were shabby, his face wan, his manner melancholy and depressed. He appeared to shun observation, devoting himself to the pictures, and marking the catalogue with the stump of a cedar pencil against the numbers of the most notable works. He refrained from looking to the right or to the left, lest he should be recognised by some person who knew him. Still, his efforts to avoid observation were of no avail, for he was accosted by a person equipped in a very different style. He was fashionably dressed; the pencil which he used was of gold, and the smile which he constantly wore, showed that he was on excellent terms with everything around him, but more especially with himself. Both these young gentlemen were critics—the one belonging to a new, unknown, and unimportant periodical; the other was attached to a journal of old standing, being a son of one of the proprietors.

The critics went over the pictures, as critics of that stamp and standing generally do, finding a great deal more to condemn than to praise. At length they were attracted to a painting which, though in a not very conspicuous place, had attracted a number of spectators. They overheard many praises lavished on it from lips recognised 'about town' as oracles, and at length were able to get a sight of it. It was a domestic scene; simple, unpretending, but full of sentiment and truth. It represented a small room, in the midst of which stood an antique writing-table, on which were strewn papers, writing materials, and an open book. Across a high-backed chair was thrown a dressing-gown—a pair of slippers lying negligently on the floor. There was only one figure, that of a female, who was placing flowers in a vase, her needle-work having apparently been just

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laid on the table to arrange the bouquet. Honey-suckles and woodbines were creeping in at the window; and beyond it appeared a pretty landscape, intersected by a river. The tone, keeping, and character displayed in this simple subject, the expression—so fraught with happiness and contentment, which sat on the face of the female—the arrangement of the various accessories of the picture, gave to it a stamp of excellence and originality which caused each beholder to look at the catalogue to discover the painter. They found the picture entered thus—“*His study*”—Jane Lambton.” One of the spectators, on reading these words, became agitated; his head awoke, and he laid violent hold on his fashionable friend’s arm to prevent himself from falling. He was led out in a state bordering on insensibility, and with difficulty reached his wretched home.

This little scene made a great effect on the fashionable critic; he attributed it all to the beauty of the picture, which he thought must therefore be very fine. Accordingly a high eulogy on Jane Lambton’s production appeared next day in his father’s influential paper.

In the torn-down depressed critic the reader will readily recognise Barnton. From the time he left Worcester, he had, instead of rigorously setting himself to some definite branch of art or literature, first created, and then fed himself on delusive hopes. His uncle had died in embarrassed circumstances, and his expected government situation was point blank refused. He made a set of literary acquaintance, not so much for the purpose of following literature as a means of existence, as an amusement. His family had become too poor to assist him; one friend dropped off after another, as his demands for the ‘help’ he refused ‘himself’ increased; and he was now reduced to a low stage of poverty and actual privation. True, his literary friends sometimes furnished him with employment, but it seldom brought pay; and it was to perform one of these profitless tasks that he found his way to the exhibition. It is a singular fact, that the earliest character which nearly every literary adventurer undertakes in the metropolis, is one which requires the greatest amount of experience, acumen, and learning—that of a critic!

In an ill-furnished room, in a court leading out of Fleet Street, Barnton had for several months dragged on a hopeful yet listless existence; but gradually hope after hope fell away, and now not one remained. He had refrained, according to the mutual agreement, from communicating with Jane; besides, the impression of her which he expressed in his farewell letter had always rankled in his breast. Would she sympathise with his distresses, even if she knew them? Far from it, he thought; she would, on the contrary, blame, or perhaps take no notice of his letter. He turned over the catalogue to assure himself that it was really she who had painted the successful picture; and even that, instead of gratifying, embittered his mind. ‘Still,’ he argued, ‘the same cold, plodding girl, with no idea more refined than money, and earning it. Yet some sentiment was surely expressed in the picture? But who had awakened it? Certainly not he. A new rival had perhaps sprung up. Time would show, for the anniversary of their parting was near at hand. But how was he to live till then, short as the interval was?’ Overcome with these thoughts and bodily exhaustion, Barnton threw himself on his pallet, and wept tears of vexation—not, alas! of repentance; for he was as far from ‘helping himself’ as ever. Fever, brought on by grief and privation, confined him to that bed for weeks: never was an unfortunate dreamer rendered so perfectly helpless and destitute.

There was a very different aspect of affairs in Jane’s cottage as the long-expected day drew near. Her increasing industry had been crowned with the brightest success. Her China painting was so much admired, and her pencil in such great request, that her prices doubled. Her picture was sold on the first day of the exhibition; and, to her astonishment, instead of the modest sum she

had asked for it, double its amount was enclosed from the purchaser, with a letter apologising for, rather than making a merit of the liberal act. He also commissioned her to paint another, leaving her to choose the subject.

Oh how happy Jane was when she went with Mr Mason to deposit this large accession to her savings in the bank! Her companion was not, however, so joyous; he advised her to moderate her expectations, for in proportion as they were raised, so would her disappointment be great. ‘Remember,’ he added, ‘it is only a week to the time.’

Jane promised to bear the worst with resignation, even should the worst come. She could safely promise this if her present feelings would only last, they were so full of hope for the future—so modestly, yet truly self-applauding. The cottage, as she approached it on her return, lay smiling under a shining spring sun. She compared it with what it was last spring; then it was surrounded by a waste; now a pretty garden, and a handsome lawn, adorned it, and all effected by her own industry. ‘What a pretty picture it will make!’ she exclaimed, as she tripped in to tell Mary to get lunch ready for her kind friend the clergyman. A thought crossed her, and a tear stood in her eye. Would it be even in her power to give the same order for *him*? O yes; she felt, she knew it would.

Poor Jane! with all her prudence and industry, she, too, nursed sanguine and chimerical hopes, the results of enthusiasm and romance, a tinge of which was by no means inconsistent with her otherwise staid and common-sense character. Day by day her glowing fancy planned out Barnton’s career. Perhaps he was studying some science, or writing a great poem which would secure his fame. She always coupled him with industry and success, judging of his progress by her own, and never doubting that he would keep his promise, and strive for himself. It was these feelings which prompted her to choose the subject of her picture, and to which, perhaps, its success must be traced. Her whole soul was brought to bear upon it. It was like truth and nature, because she never once doubted that it *would* come true, sooner or later.

Borne up by this hope to the last, the important day arrived, without there being any visible alteration in Jane Lambton’s demeanour. When, however, the postman brought her a letter, a full tide of emotion swept over her. ‘He has *not* forgotten me!’ she exclaimed; and old Mary could only with difficulty support her, so violent were her sobs.

It was long before her agitation subsided sufficiently to enable her to peruse the epistle. Luckily, the reaction was complete, and the girl was perhaps firmer, better nerved to encounter the shock that she was doomed to receive, than if it had fallen upon her in a calmer moment. The letter was in the form of a journal, commenced about four days previously—the writing was faint and indistinct. Barnton began by asking a blessing on Jane Lambton’s head. He bitterly regretted they had ever loved; sickness had overtaken him; he was, he thought, dying, and wrote before the time, lest he should never live to see the day they had appointed to communicate with each other. Under the next day’s date he described himself as worse—scarcely able to hold a pen. Under the third date he implored her to forgive his failings, and to forget him. This was all! death, perhaps, had stayed his hand from writing more!

This, the direst ending of all her anticipations it would have been possible to inflict, Jane bore with wonderful fortitude. There was no time lost in unavailing grief. That night she and old Mary were on their way to London!

Jane, in alighting from the coach, was accosted by a well-known voice, that of Polter. ‘I hope you will forgive us, Miss Lambton,’ he said; ‘but your measures not having been so swiftly taken as to escape the wishful anxiety of Emilia, she insisted upon my travelling up

in the same vehicle, to offer any assistance that lies in my power.'

Jane thanked him from her heart. She had already had time to reflect that the step she had taken was sufficiently rash to be open to misconstruction, and was glad to avail herself of Polter's guardianship. He, who knew everything from Emilia, knew what to do, and having deposited Jane and her attendant in the inn, went straight to Barnton's lodging.

The morning was just breaking as he entered the court. He found the house with difficulty—knocked, and was answered by a saucy girl. He inquired for Barnton; but as he was only known to the maid as the 'two pair back,' there was some difficulty in making her understand whom he meant. Her reply was, that she believed he was dying, but that he was welcome to go and see.

Lying on a wretched pallet, and surrounded by every mark of destitution, Polter beheld, not without shuddering, his former friend. Barnton's impaired consciousness prevented him from at first recognising his visitor. When he did, he grasped his hand with a faint pressure, and tears stood in his eyes. Polter, who knew that too much sympathy tended to aggravate rather than to assuage suffering, made as light as he could of his friend's condition, and assured him that he was commissioned by his best friends to allow him to want nothing. Barnton scarcely heeded what was said. In a faint voice he inquired about 'Jane.'

This inquiry Polter declined to answer for the present, alleging the sufferer's weakness as an excuse for not agitating his feelings. He begged him to calm himself, while he went to obtain proper assistance. He then hastened to a physician known to his father, and brought him to Barnton's bed-side. Nourishment continually administered was prescribed, and its effects were visible on the patient's frame even before the end of the day. On the morrow it was thought safe to communicate to the patient what had happened—that Jane had travelled to London on purpose to help him, now he could no longer help himself. The physician, however, forbade any interview for the present; and it was not till Barnton was able to be removed from his wretched abode that the lovers met.

Polter had already established Miss Lambton and old Mary in lodgings, and it was there that the meeting which had caused Jane so many pleasurable anticipations, and such bitter disappointment, took place. Jane's true, enduring, and sincere affection was forcibly displayed at this interview. Every violent indication of emotion she purposely suppressed, lest it should affect the invalid. The characteristics of their sex were changed; for while the girl displayed a vigorous mastery over her mind, the man wept. The first emotions over, a new and delightful set of feelings stole over Jane Lambton; she was at length near him to whom her heart was knit—she was able to help him, and this ability she had earned by her own unaided exertions. But, more than all, it was manifest that he still loved her; for his proud, hitherto unyielding spirit, did not refuse the proffered assistance. Still he accepted it under a solemn promise, which he made to himself, never to need assistance again if his own exertions could prevent that necessity.

Barnton has kept his word. As soon as his recovery was complete, he separated himself once more from Jane Lambton. She returned to Worcester, while he sought employment in London with untiring perseverance, and at length gained it—condescending to commence as clerk to a merchant at a very small salary, out of which he contrived during six months to save money. Recently, the firm which had so long employed Jane required the services of such a person as Barnton, and having obtained the most satisfactory testimonials, he was engaged. Meantime Jane, devoting herself entirely to her easel, had given up China painting, and her next picture established that reputation as an artist which she enjoys. In the present year's catalogue, how-

ever, her name will appear as Mrs Barnton; for George and she were recently married by Mr Mason, who had already made Polter and his daughter man and wife.

Mr and Mrs Barnton reside in the cottage, and, small as it is, they find it quite large enough for happiness. As Barnton's daily employment leaves him some leisure, he employs it profitably by contributing to the periodical literature of the day. The scene of these labours is 'His study,' and thus the dearest wish of Jane's heart is fulfilled—her picture is realised.

#### GEOGRAPHICAL DISCOVERY IN 1843.\*

At no period since the days of early Spanish discovery were men so intent upon exploring little-known regions as during the present century. This is well, since nothing facilitates the progress of civilisation more than thus bringing the distant and uneducated people of the various quarters of the globe in constant relation with their more favoured brethren. A glance at what has been done during the past year will amply demonstrate our position.

In Europe, Hommaire de Hell has employed himself, and is still actively engaged, in exploring the Crimea, and the steppes of Russia. With indefatigable zeal he has crossed a great portion of this country in every direction, followed the course of rivers and streams on foot and on horseback, visited the Russian shores of the Black Sea, of the Sea of Azof, and the Caspian; joining to all this the study of man in every sense. His wife accompanies him, taking careful and ample notes of all that she observes. Odessa was the starting point, whence he diverged in every direction which promised interest or advantage: the Volga, Astracan, the Caucasus, the Calmuc Cossacks, were each examined in their turn. His examination of the Caspian Sea is singularly interesting. For a long time a diminution has been observed in the waters of this great inland sea, even distant salt lakes marking the former vast extent of its surface. M. Hommaire's examinations tend to prove a former union with the Black Sea, its separation from which, and the decrease in the waters of the Oural, Volga, and Emba, partly caused by agricultural operations on their banks, appear to be the principal causes of the phenomenon. Xavier Marmier, a French traveller, has recently visited Finland, St Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, and Cracow, collecting much interesting matter relating to the literature of a people becoming daily more and more interesting. The Russian government, also, has favoured exploring expeditions; that of Humboldt to the Oural mountains, and the geological examinations of Baér, who in Lapland, Nova Zembla, and the islands on the coast of Finland, has discovered subterraneous stone labyrinths of great antiquity, to the origin of which no clue is yet known.

Flandin and Coste, lately engaged in drawing the ruins of Persepolis, have started to examine those of Nineveh, said to be recently discovered by Botta. The site of the ancient capital of Assyria was known to be near Moussoul, on the Tigris, and called Nino. Botta has therefore only found the ruins, not the place, and having bought them for a few thousand francs, it will soon be known how much remains of the great city, which, according to Strabo, was three days' journey in circuit. Eugène Boré—it will be seen that the French are great travellers—in now in Persia; while Tchihatcheff, late of the Russian expedition to Khiva, has announced his travels in Altaï.

In Africa, despite the terrors of the climate, much has been done, though many have perished, victims to their zeal. A Norwegian, Mensen-Ernst, on his way to discover the sources of the White Nile, died in Upper Egypt, where he was buried near the first cataract. Nestor Lhôte, a learned Frenchman, died also in the

\* This article has been prepared for our pages by a gentleman who, from official situation, enjoys considerable advantages for the purpose.

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same country. A crocodile devoured Dr Petit in the river above-mentioned, which proved also fatal, a short time afterwards, to a Mr Lloyd. Still, others advance in their footsteps; and one Prisse, in April, pushed up the country to visit the ruins of Carnac, ere they were quite destroyed by the workmen of Mohammed Ali. Meanwhile, a Prussian scientific commission, under Lepsius, was exploring a portion of the same country, discovering and describing a hundred and six tombs near the pyramid of Gizeh. Despite its terror, in how many points has Africa been assaulted by the enterprise of Europeans? — through Egypt and Algiers, Senegal and the Niger, the Cape and Port Natal, and Abyssinia. While Lieutenant Christopher has discovered a river of great depth and width, bordered by a most interesting people, while Harris has penetrated to the Christian kingdom of Shoa, Rochet d'Hericourt's travels in Abyssinia, strengthening the commercial relations of France in that quarter. It is stated in his recent letters, dated Ankober, that he is about starting to visit Djingiro and Anaria, as well as the lake Aoussa, as he calls it, about fifty miles from the sea, and receiving the waters of the Aouache. To cross Africa is the ultimate object of the French government agent, Abadie, Combes, Taminier, and the late Dr Petit—whose materials on the Azoubo-Gallas are deeply interesting—have penetrated also into these regions. Thibaud and Arnaud, in Nubia and the Bahr-el-Abiad, are seeking the sources of the White Nile; as well as Mr Bailey, an English traveller, who is penetrating in the direction indicated by the natives—that is, about Bakka-Kalla. Captain Jehenne and his subordinate, Parsama, are exploring the coast of Socotra and the north-east of Africa. Berbera, or Beurbura, presents the singular aspect of a town without any government. The Somalis, who inhabit it, are fine well-made men, darker than the Arabs, with regular features, large eyes, and an intelligent expression. Tadjoura will, it is said, be constituted a British port for trading with Abyssinia. In Algiers, the French government is carrying on extensive geographical surveys, which from time to time are given to the public.

In America, which, since the publicity given to its ruined cities, has become doubly interesting, much has been done. Major Poussin has visited the United States, and an elaborate work is promised. California, of which Forbes's history is the only satisfactory account ever yet published, has just been explored most fully by Dufour de Mofras; and his account of his labours on a country which promises so wide a field of emigration, is looked forward to with much interest. Farnham's Travels in California are announced, and, if we may judge from his previous delightful work, will be valuable. Gay's researches in Peru and Chili will unfold much that is mysterious in these celebrated countries: on the kingdom and town of Cuzco in particular, it is said that Mr. Gay will give extensive information. De Castelnau, after exploring Florida, has started to mount the Amazon river, and cross the cordillera of the Andes. This is a magnificent field for geographical research. Since Francis Orellana, in 1539, who first spoke of a republic of Amazons; since Pedro de Ursua, who sought in 1560 the famous lake of gold and town of El Dorado, this part of the country has been little visited: Raleigh, Pedro Texeira, in 1638; Fathers Acuna and Artieda, Father Fritz, Condamine, in 1743; Messrs Smith, and Man, and Humboldt, make up, we believe, the entire list. De Castelnau, therefore, has a fine and little-explored field; and in proportion as his task is immense, and fraught with difficulty and danger, in proportion will be the reward. Accident appears to have recently aided very much the cause of science. While Humboldt, by means of his vast erudition, is seeking to prove that America was known to Europeans before the time of Columbus, one Nathaniel Schoolcraft, agent of the United States government at Michillimackinac, has found in the valley of the Ohio a stone bearing an inscription composed of twenty-four Runic figures; a

silver pair of pincers, exactly similar to those so often found in bronze in Scandinavian tumuli, has been discovered in Bahia by Kroyer, a Danish naturalist; arrows collected in California are the same as those used by the Greenlanders, undoubted Scandinavians; and three Peruvian vases lately dug up are no other than Etruscans. A vast amount of attention has been excited amid the learned by these curious facts.

Oceania, or the South Seas, is rife in voyages. Baron Thierry, at the Bay of Islands, leading a miserable life, is a curious feature in colonisation. His history is strange. Born during the political emigration, of French parents, held at the baptismal font by the Count d'Artois, the Baron Thierry yet received an English education. Wishing to colonise New Zealand, where he had purchased some million of acres, he essayed to obtain the support of the British government, failing which he sought that of France. Losing his means in a speculation, one fine morning he found himself in the West Indies, whence he crossed over to Panama, tried to colonise the Musquito shore, and failing, sailed for the Marquesas. Here he obtained, by way of pastime, a sovereignty over Nouka-Hiva, and then started for Tahiti, whence he visited New Zealand, where his unfortunate attempt was an utter failure. Here he learned that France had seized the Marquesas. Recollecting that he was king of Nouka, he was indignant; but not possessing the means of warring with France, he sold his sovereignty to a Belgian, and Thierry I abdicated in favour of a good citizen of Brussels. It appears that Borneo is likely to become a colony of Great Britain. Mr Brooks, whose residence in that country has brought it into prominent notice, has already obtained a cession of the territory of Sarawak, sixty miles long and fifty wide, admirably fertile, and producing almost every conceivable vegetable and plant. The return of Ross is an event of great importance in a geographical point of view, and doubtless, when the details are fully known, will prove of deep interest. Such are the principal features in geographical progress for the year 1843, which, it must be seen, are of great importance.

#### POPULAR FRENCH SONGS.

NO. IV.—JEAN DE NIVELLE.

'Like Jean de Nivelle's dog, he runs away when you call to him.'  
—French Proverb.

LIKE a great many popular ditties, the rhymes with the above title keep their currency amongst the populace of France, less on account of intrinsic merit, than from their being wedded to a pretty tune, which it is always deemed a sort of profanation to set to other than the original words. It would appear that, when in 1695 the French overrun Belgium, they brought the melody away amongst other spoils, and transported it to Paris, where it at once became popular. Our translation is derived from a broadside ballad printed at Namur in 1680, and which is now very rare.

JEAN DE NIVELLE.

Jean de Nivelle is a name  
Which belongs to a hero of fame;  
In war, or when near to a belle,  
No rival has Jean de Nivelle.  
We know very well,  
A fine fellow is John of Nivelle!  
Jean de Nivelle has three flails;  
Three palfreys with long manes and tails;  
Three blades of a terrible brand,  
Which he seldom takes into his hand.  
We know very well,  
A fine fellow is John of Nivelle! \*

\* The exigencies of English rhythm and rhyme force us to take some freedom with this stanza. The verse stands thus in the original:—

Jean de Nivelle a trois martœux,  
Trois palfreys et trois châteaux,  
Et puis trois lames de flamberge,  
Qu'il laisse parfois à l'auberge.  
Ah ! oui vraiment ?  
Jean de Nivelle est bon enfant.

Jean de Nivelle has three halls,  
Without rafters or roof on its walls,  
So that swallows are chiefly his guests,  
And they fill up his rooms with their nests.

We know very well,

A fine fellow is John of Nivelle!

Jean de Nivelle is oft seen  
In three coats—one yellow, one green,  
The third thin, like paper, and white,  
Which he wears when it freezes at night.

We know very well,

A fine fellow is John of Nivelle!

Jean de Nivelle has three stools;  
One in front, one behind. When he speaks,  
His beautiful mistress to see,  
He puts into harness all three.

We know very well,

A fine fellow is John of Nivelle!

Jean de Nivelle has three pigs;  
One tumbles, while one dances jigs;  
And the third up a ladder ascends,  
Then turns and as nimbly descends.

We know very well,

A fine fellow is John of Nivelle!

Jean de Nivelle has three cats;  
One is blind, but a demon for rats;  
And the others, with infinite grace,  
Are at work manufacturing lace.

We know very well,

A fine fellow is John of Nivelle!

Jean de Nivelle also shows  
Three children; but one has no nose;  
No teeth has the second; 'tis said  
The third has no brains in his head.

We know very well,

A fine fellow is John of Nivelle!

Jean de Nivelle has one dog,  
Who besides no one else will e'er jog,  
For the leader to him you may cry,  
The further away he will fly.

We know very well,

A fine fellow is John of Nivelle!

And now, who is this Jean de Nivelle, whom his dog has made so proverbially celebrated? To answer this, we must collect the sage ideas of the curious in old proverbs. Brûzen de la Martinière partially solves the riddle. 'Jean de Nivelle,' he remarks, 'of whom so much is said, is nothing more than an iron figure which stands straight on his legs on the top of a tower beside the clock of Nivelle' on the Grand Place. This metal statue strikes the hours with his hammer.' But this explains nothing about the dog; and we shall get no nearer to the solution even if we cite M. Dewez's Geographical Dictionary, which says, 'Jean de Nivelle, who has made such a noise in the world, is simply a bronze effigy placed outside the tower of the college, who strikes, not the hours, as others have stated, but the half hours, with his hammer on the great clock.'

Further research, however, informs us that this figure is a monument to which has been attached the name of a historical personage who bestowed the collegiate church of St Gertrude on the town of Nivelle; whether correctly or not, remains to be proved. John II., of the Montmorency family, espoused Jane de Fosseux, a lady of Nivelle. One of the sons proceeding from this marriage was called Jean de Nivelle. John the second became a widower, made a second marriage with Marguerite d'Orgemont, and followed the fortunes of Louis XI.; whilst his son, John de Nivelle, enrolled himself under the banner of Charles the Bold, who secured him possession of the estates to which he was born. His father, incited by the French king, and by Marguerite d'Orgemont, summoned him three times by three sergeants and heralds at arms, to hasten and join his father's soldiers, and to fight for the king of France, the legitimate sovereign of the Montmorencies. But Jean de Nivelle, who had secret warning that it was intended to cast him into a solitary tower, flew from his father's emissaries. He was consequently disinherited, and designated by his father 'a dog,' which gave rise to the national proverb, 'He is like a dog, or that

dog Jean de Nivelle, who runs away when he is called.' He afterwards settled in Belgium, where Charles the Bold heaped fortune and honours upon him; having married Gudule Vilain, of Ghent, lady of Liedekerke, and was the grandfather of Phillip of Montmorency, Count of Horn, who was beheaded at Brussels in 1568.—Another account says that John of Nivelle was one of the most powerful Belgian nobles, who called himself also John of Montmorency. Having a character naturally turbulent, he did not check the violence of his temper even towards his father, and in a domestic quarrel actually struck him. Though cited for this unfilial act before the court of parliament, he refused to appear. In vain was he summoned, according to custom, by the sound of trumpet at all the cross-roads of Paris: the more they summoned him, the faster he flew to the coast of Flanders; and the populace, who are never at a loss for quaint expressions to apply to individuals whom they favour or despise, called him 'the dog Jean de Nivelle, who runs away when he is called!—an expression which has passed into a proverb.

There is a third version of the story of the iron figure of Nivelle, which is far more probable than either of the above: Bouchard V., sire of Montmorency, who often visited Belgium, was in 1156 at Nivelle, and paid his respects to the abbess of St Gertrude, she being the lady of the manor. The noble and reverend lady received him while surrounded by her canoneesses. With one of these nuns Bouchard fell in love, and the after-consequence was the birth of a son, who was named Jean de Nivelle. He grew up a fine man, and good cavalier, and gained honour at several tournaments. At the court of the good Duke Godefroid-le-Courageux he won the heart of a young and noble damsel, with whom he eloped towards a small estate his father had given him near Nivelle. Hastening joyously along on his palfrey with the lady behind him, and followed by a faithful greyhound, he encountered a richly-caperisoned and noble knight, who, on observing the youth and beauty of his companion, barred his further progress, and disputed the lovely prize with him. Though Jean had not the smallest dread of breaking a lance with the stranger, he proposed, in place of fighting, that the question should be left to the decision of the lady, who should be free to choose whichever of the claimants for her hand she had the greater fancy for. The stranger knight consented; and—alas for poor Jean!—to his great surprise and mortification the fickle damsel left him, to go with the grand cavalier. Jean sorrowfully continued his route, having nothing to comfort him but his dog. But soon after, the damsel, who loved the hound because he was pretty and faithful, told her new lover that he must obtain it for her. The cavalier returned, overtook the disconsolate lover, and demanded his dog. 'Let us,' said Jean as calmly as he could, 'adopt the same expedient upon this animal as settled our dispute about the lady. Call the dog to you, and if he follow, he is yours.' The knight declared that Jean had spoken wisely; but when he called the gentle greyhound, it did not follow the example of the false lady. On the contrary, the more the cavalier called it, the more quickly it flew towards its master, who was thus allowed to keep it. This is perhaps a truer, certainly a prettier, explanation of the proverb than either of the former.

#### LONDON CHIT-CHAT.

MAY, 1844.

'THE season,' as it is called, has commenced. The town is full, the streets at the west end are crowded with carriages, public amusements abound, and the weather, though labouring under the influence of an east wind, is dry, sunny, and pleasant. Since arriving in the Great Metropolis, I have sauntered a good deal about both in the interior and environs, and in different quarters have observed tokens of extension and improvement. Where will this vast agglomeration of brick houses terminate? At Camden-town—no longer an isolated suburb—on the north, I noticed the

\* Nivelle, or Nivelles, is a small town in the province of Brabant, for its manufacture of fine linen.

other day whole lines of streets, crescents, and places rising into habitable existence; and the same thing is seen in the space between Kensington and Brompton, which is rapidly filling up with squares and streets, some of them more than usually handsome. In a new and partially-formed square in this quarter I had the curiosity to ask the annual rent of a house, and learned it was £110—the accommodations not being better than those of a sixty-pound house in Edinburgh. In the new buildings, generally, there is a sensible improvement. Domestic architecture is advancing in elegance; a taste is displayed in the windows, doorways, and elevations, which one does not see in the bold house-architecture of fifty years ago—a circumstance doubtless ascribable to the free general discussion now-a-days of all matters in which the fine arts are concerned.

What is somewhat curious, while taste in building private mansions is on the advance, taste in public edifices, of nearly all kinds, is still about as poor as it was in the dark age of the reign of George III. The only way one can account for this anomaly, is by supposing that in most instances public structures, abandoned to the management of ill-selected committees, are either jobbed or neglected. The only great building of the day which is felt to be entirely satisfactory is the grand Gothic edifice in the course of being erected for the accommodation of the houses of parliament. It is now getting into shape, but years will still be required to finish it. The new Royal Exchange is in some respects a fine building, and occupies a good situation, considerably improved by the removal of old houses in its neighbourhood; yet it is singularly defective in grandeur. The front, a pediment with Corinthian columns, wants bulk and height. Timidly conceived, it sinks beneath the adjacent buildings, which it ought, on the contrary, to have risen against and overshadowed.

A few days ago Trafalgar Square was laid open to the public. This space of ground, which, as long as I remember, has been surrounded with boards—a favourite field for all sorts of bill-sticking operations—has been at length united with the common thoroughfares around it. Situated in front of the National Gallery, and behind Charing Cross, at what may be called a great centering point, the square promises to be one of the finest things in the metropolis—a kind of Place de Concorde—with monuments and fountains as its principal ornaments. The ground being excavated to bring it to a level, the area is necessarily below the street on the north, and on this side it is bounded by a granite wall and parapet, and is reached by flights of steps. On the west and east it has also bounding walls, and it is entirely open only on the south. Unlike as this inequality makes it to the *places* of continental cities, the lowering towards the north is perhaps an advantage, for it gives the effect of a little more height to the National Gallery, for which everybody is exceedingly thankful. Within the open area are two ponds, enclosed by raised walls of granite, uniform with the surrounding walls of the square, and these patches of water are farther, as I understand, to be decorated with jets d'eau—the liquid furnished by Artesian wells now in preparation. At the north-east angle, and therefore at a prominent point of the square, is placed Chantrey's equestrian statue of George IV. A pedestal for a similar statue at the northwest angle is still vacant. The great object of the square, however, is the column placed in the middle, almost to the interruption of the passengers on the trottoir from the Strand to Pall-Mall. This handsome pillar is surmounted by a bronze statue of Lord Nelson, which has been a mark for much amusing criticism. The cocked hat is certainly grotesque, though how to get rid of it, and yet preserve the character of the admiral in his full dress, is a difficulty which I cannot pretend to solve. I am inclined to think that the cocked hat might pass muster, and that the great defect of the exhibition is an ugly coil of thick rope which the figure almost seems to sit upon. Here I think the artist has been singularly unfortunate, and I would hope that this ungainly object might yet be in some way modified.

So much for the *physique* of Trafalgar Square, now for its *sordid*. Trifling as is the accession to the open grounds of London, the laying open of what is but a small patch of ground indicates a progress in the right direction. Let us hope and trust that open-air loitering spots will elsewhere be set apart within the densely-crowded compass of the metropolis—something to attract idlers from the public house. Much requires to be done for this purpose. In a walk along Holborn and through St Giles last Sun-

day evening, I observed every gin and beer-shop crowded with customers. Surely, thought I, society has not done wisely in presenting no other scene of attraction to these revellers. Apropos of metropolitan intemperance, a return has lately been made to the House of Commons on the subject, from which a few facts may be gleaned. In 1831 the total number of persons taken into custody for drunkenness by the metropolitan police was 31,332, and in 1832 it was 32,636. From this number it has gradually declined, notwithstanding the increase of population, and a great extension of the police bounds, to no more than 10,890 in 1843. The proportion of male and female cases has remained much the same. From 19,748 males, the number has declined to 6,752; and from 11,605 females, the number has declined to 4,138. So far, there appears to be a distinct decrease of gross intemperance; but from a corresponding report on disorderly conduct, one would be led to infer that there is, on the whole, not any great improvement in the general habits of the lower classes of London. In 1831 the total number of persons taken into custody for disorderly conduct was 10,333. In 1834 it was 11,660; from which it increased to 14,835 in 1843. Perhaps in this, as in many similar returns, an allowance should be made for increased vigilance in the police: what is now considered disorderly conduct, may at one time have been passed over as harmless pleasantries. The want of explanation on such points renders returns of delinquency of much less value than they might otherwise be.

The other day I went with some ladies to the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, to see what is at present spoken of as the chief curiosity among the sights of London, an American dwarf, usually known as General Tom Thumb. We were all much amused with the exhibition of this little creature, whose smallness exceeded our expectation. On entering the hall, we found it occupied by a concourse of ladies and gentlemen engaged in observing the antics of the dwarf, who was merrily trotting up and down a large table, carpeted, and surrounded by a railing to prevent his falling off. On the table were also a chair, table, and sofa of miniature dimensions, suitable to the size of the little fellow; and at one end was a tiny scaffold, with a stair, covered with red cloth, which he occasionally climbed, to be more conspicuously observable. One could not but feel interested in such a singular spectacle, yet the interest was mingled with a degree of pity. We had before us a human figure, dressed as a fashionable gentleman, in coat, trousers, Wellington boots, waistcoat, and cravat, and yet not more than twenty-five inches in height. The face was quite infantile, and so also were the movements and speech of the dwarf. An exhibitor, whom we could not mistake for anything but an American, kept him in conversation, and led him to show off a few of his pranks. One of these was selling a history of himself for sixpence, the ladies pressing forward to buy copies, and each receiving a kiss on being handed the book. Of course one was purchased by a lady of our party, and from this I extract the following particulars.

Charles S. Stratton, the true name of the little hero, was born at Bridgeport, Connecticut, United States, January 11, 1832, and is now consequently upwards of twelve years of age. His parents are people of the common size, with nothing at all remarkable in their physical or mental organisation. At his birth, the general, as he is usually called, weighed 9 lbs. 2 oz., which is rather greater than the average weight of children at their birth. There were no extraordinary circumstances attending his advent, or preceding it, and he was considered a very handsome, hearty, and promising boy. Nothing remarkable was noticed respecting him until he was about five months old, when he weighed 15 lbs., about which time his parents and their neighbours began to remark that he did not continue to grow. Still, there were no indications of disease; and expecting that he would soon take a start, his parents thought little of the matter. Time passed on, and the general became remarkably strong, playful, active, intelligent, and handsome—increasing in vigour and the manliness of his proportions, but not increasing one inch in height, or one ounce in weight. It is proper to state, that he has always enjoyed a good appetite, partaking freely of the ordinary dishes found upon the tables of the labouring classes, has sound refreshing sleep, and has always been in the most perfect health, with the exception of those slight colds, &c. to which the best-regulated constitutions are liable. Since his birth, his parents have had two other children, who are now well-grown and interesting subjects.

nine and seven years of age. There is nothing in his history or appearance, or of his family, to give the least clue to the astonishing phenomenon which he exemplifies.

His height is now twenty-five inches, and his weight only 15 lbs. 2 oz. When walking about a room, his head scarcely reaches to the knees of a person of ordinary stature, and is about on a level with the seats of the chairs and ottomans of the drawing-room. Thousands have visited Major Stevens, long known as the American dwarf, at various museums. But beside General Tom Thumb he looks like a giant, being about twice his height, and four times his weight. The first time that Stevens saw Tom Thumb he was as much astonished as any other visitor; and after looking down at him a while, he pleasantly remarked, 'I may be exhibited hereafter, perhaps, but it will be as a giant.' Jeffrey Hudson, the amusing dwarf who cuts so conspicuous a figure in *Peveril of the Peak*, till about thirty years old, was only eighteen inches in height, and so far he beat Tom Thumb in littleness; but Jeffrey afterwards shot up to three feet nine inches. The feat of concealing Jeffrey in a pie, could be equally well performed with Tom Thumb. Often, continues our authority, he has hidden himself in ladies' muffs; and at Boston he was carried a considerable distance in a lady's work-basket. In strength, activity, and vivacity, the general is remarkable. He is constantly engaged in walking about, talking, and in various pastimes and employments, from early in the morning till late at night, without showing signs of fatigue, and seems the happiest little fellow in the world. Never was a human being of any size blessed with a kinder heart or more excellent disposition.

The account goes on to state, that after having visited many parts of America, and been seen by vast numbers of people, he is now on a visit to Europe with his parents, who have engaged as their agent Mr. Barnum from the Museum, New York. Since his arrival in London, he has appeared several times by invitation before the Queen and other members of the royal family. We are likewise informed that the general's education has, until recently, been neglected, which one could very easily imagine, considering the temptation to make a continual show of his person. There is, however, it is said, no lack of intelligence or aptitude to learn, and he is now advancing in the art of reading and other branches of education. Care is also devoted to his moral and religious education; and the general was never known to utter a falsehood.

So much for the written account of this extremely interesting dwarf, some facts in which I should have doubted, if the difficulty of practising any imposition in the case had not been obvious. I should have been inclined, for instance, to believe the age exaggerated, as the face is more like that of a child of six or seven than thirteen years old. His head is small, though in proper proportion to his body; his hair fair; and his face bears an exceedingly small and infant-like nose. The only personal defect seems to be an undu-shoars of arms, his small chubby hands being scarcely able to meet behind his back. His feats in personating ancient statues, Napoleon, and other characters, though clever for a child, are not more remarkable than what have been often performed in the London theatres by girls of seven or eight years of age. Nevertheless, the general is unquestionably a great curiosity, and excites a lively interest in his favour. I should only be fearful that the constant action of his brain—the incessant obligation to chatter and show himself off—would be attended with the usual effects of excessive mental excitement in infancy. There is already a pertness in his looks and sayings which indicates the ordinary forced condition of mind in American children; and this, as well as the toil of exhibition, should be carefully abridged, otherwise it is not likely that the little fellow will reach the age of his prototype Hudson.

#### PRINCIPLES OF ART APPLIED TO DOMESTIC USE.

You are going to decorate your drawing-room or dining-room both with furniture and colouring. Before you speak to your upholsterer or house-painter, have a perfect understanding and recognition of what is the aspect of the room. Let no circumstances make you regardless of this fundamental consideration. No cost will remedy the forgetfulness. Spend what you will, you will always repent having a cold colour in a room lighted from the north, or a very hot colour in a room lighted from the south. If the

aspect be north, north-east, north-west, or due east, the general tone of colouring should be positively warm. Blues, greens, and all shaded colours which involve any predominant use of blues, must be avoided. There is a drawing-room in the Reform Club, looking north, which may convince any one of the mistake of forgetting aspect. The walls and curtains are blue; with all its elegance—and its ceiling and cornice are beautiful—the effect of this room by daylight is always chilly. It would be just the reverse if it looked upon Carlton Gardens. There is also a room in Windsor Castle, looking on the north terrace, called Queen Adelaide's room, which is decorated with blue and silver, a most frigid-looking room even in the midst of summer. In such aspects the choice should tend towards reds, and all their various combinations with yellow. As the aspect approaches east and west, so the colours should verge towards yellow rather than red tints. In an eastern aspect, tints of light yellow, lemon-colours, &c. are always effective and cheerful. If the aspect of the room be south, south-west, or west, and open to the sun, then we may venture on the use of cooler colours, even on positive blue, should our taste lead us in that direction.

The supply of light, the size of the room, and its purpose, appear to be the chief circumstances which ought to regulate the strength or depths of the colours to be used. Where the light is strong, unobscured, and plentiful, the tone of the colouring may be full; on the other hand, where the supply of light is small, the tone of the colouring should be light. In the houses of the ancients, the strongest and darkest colours, even blacks, as we have already observed, were used on large surfaces when the apartment received a direct and full light from above. Under a strong and abundant light, full-toned colours preserve their brightness and distinctive character, but when the light is feeble, and the supply of it limited, they become dull and gloomy. Full-toned colours lessen the apparent size of the room; light colouring enlarges it. A little attention to the proportion between the space to be coloured and the depth of the colouring, becomes therefore of great importance. If you wish to make your room appear as large as possible, then exclude dark colouring, not only on the large surfaces, but even in the patterns of the paper-hangings, and in the mouldings and ornamental parts. The nature of the use to which the room is applied should also influence the decision as to the tone of colouring. If the room is used mostly by artificial light, which, being less pure than daylight, materially modifies the appearance of most colours—much or little, according to their strength—then keep the colouring light. If, on the other hand, it is a room for occupation during daylight, then the tone of colouring must be deep. Red and green, with black, appear dark and grave; with white, they appear gay. We see these effects strikingly illustrated in book wrappings. Black letter-press is applied indiscriminately to red, blue, lilac, green, and yellow covers. A publisher of taste would do well to consider how much the purchase of a book is affected by the first impression it makes.—*Athenaeum.*

#### INSANITY CURED BY MENTAL EMPLOYMENT.

A carpenter was admitted as a patient into the Asylum at Wakefield. He had made previously several attempts at self-destruction, and was then in a very desponding state. After the diseased action had subsided, great dejection still remained. He was, however, most fortunately placed under the care of the gardener, who was then constructing a grotto or moss-house in the grounds. The contrivance of the building offered a scope for his ingenuity and taste. He was consulted on the arrangement of the floor, which was formed of pieces of wood, of different kinds, set in various figures. He was furnished with tools, though he was, of course, most carefully watched. He took so great an interest in the little building, that the current of his thoughts was changed—all his miseries were forgotten; and his recovery took place in the end of a few months. He very justly attributed his restoration to the 'moss-house.'—*Sir W. C. Ellis on Insanity.*

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